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24 April 1998
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ORIGINAL: FRENCH

Fifty-third session
Item 113 (c) of the preliminary list*

HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATIONS AND REPORTS OF SPECIAL RAPPORTEURS AND REPRESENTATIVES

Letter dated 23 April 1998 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to the statement issued on 21 April 1998 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union regarding the withdrawal of the United Nations human rights enquiry team from the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 113 (c) of the preliminary list.

(Signed) John WESTON
Permanent Representative of the
United Kingdom of Great Britain and
Northern Ireland to the United Nations

* A/53/50.

ANNEX

[Original: English]

Statement issued on 21 April 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union on the withdrawal of the United Nations human rights enquiry team from the Democratic Republic of the Congo

We deeply regret the circumstances that have necessitated the decision of the United Nations Secretary-General to withdraw the United Nations enquiry team that has been investigating alleged human rights violations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo since 1993. The European Union has consistently urged the Congolese authorities to ensure the fullest cooperation with the enquiry team. Despite some improvements, the team has never enjoyed full cooperation. The recent detention of a member of the enquiry team and the serious intimidation of witnesses to whom the team has spoken are unacceptable. We fully endorse the decision by the Secretary-General to withdraw the team. We do so with considerable regret, as we believe a thorough and impartial investigation into human rights violations could make a valuable contribution to long-term stability, security and sustainable development in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region as a whole.

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S/1998/365
1 May 1998

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-third session
Item 113 (b) of the preliminary list*
HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS, INCLUDING ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Letter dated 30 April 1998 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the enclosed statement of the Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. I should be grateful if you would have it circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 113 (b) of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Vladislav JOVANOVIC
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

* A/53/50.

ANNEX

Statement of the Federal Government

At the meeting of the Federal Government chaired by the Prime Minister, Mr. Radoje Kontic, information on the position of the Contact Group, adopted yesterday in Rome, was considered.

It was assessed that the position essentially demonstrated the continuation of the policies of pressure, interference in the internal affairs of Serbia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and encouraging separatism and terrorism. Such efforts are contrary to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Final Act of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the goals of peace and stability in the region.

It is surprising that the responsibility for the lack of dialogue in Kosovo and Metohija has once again been placed on the Government of the Republic of Serbia, although it is obvious that the representatives of the political parties of the Albanian minority postpone the acceptance of unconditional dialogue, the abandoning of separatist programmes and the condemnation of terrorism.

The Government has assessed that only through dialogue and by political means can all questions related to the equality of all citizens in Kosovo and Metohija be resolved, and that separatism and terrorism deserve to be unequivocally and publicly condemned and isolated by all international factors, including the countries at the Rome meeting. In that respect, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia reaffirmed its full support for the initiatives and platform of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, which contains all the elements for a meaningful political dialogue.

The Government noted that efforts to resort to sanctions and pressure to exacerbate the conditions for the normal social and economic development of our country are unfounded and counter-productive, particularly inasmuch as they impede the reform process, modernization of the economy and regional integration, important preconditions for the prosperity of the entire region and the consolidation of peace and stability.

The Government has assessed that the Yugoslav Army, in accordance with its constitutional and legal role, performs its duty of protecting the inviolability of the State's borders and the border area and of preventing the infiltration of terrorist groups and arms shipments, including other equipment for their needs.

The Government has reaffirmed on this occasion its readiness to cooperate with other countries and international organizations on an equal and principled basis. In that regard, there is also full readiness and openness for cooperation with OSCE and other international organizations and institutions after the restoration of the membership rights of our country in those organizations and institutions.

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4 May 1998

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Fifty-third session
Item 20 (b) of the preliminary list*

STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, INCLUDING SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE: SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES OR REGIONS

Letter dated 1 May 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Tajikistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On the instructions of my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a statement by the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan (see annex).

I should be very grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under item 20 (b) of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Rashid ALIMOV
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of
the Republic of Tajikistan
to the United Nations

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Annex

[Original: Russian]

Statement dated 30 April 1998 from the Government of Tajikistan

During the period from February through April of this year, abundant snowfall, avalanches, heavy downpours, spring floods, mud streams, landslides and the erosion of support embankments destroyed or inflicted severe damage on hundreds of houses situated mostly in the Republic's rural mountainous and foothill regions, more than 50 educational and health care institutions, hundreds of kilometres of motorways, dozens of bridges, more than 300 kilometres of irrigation networks and canals, power transmission lines and many other national economic facilities. The agricultural system, where crops were lost and hundreds of head of cattle perished, has suffered enormous damage. According to preliminary data, the immediate damage inflicted by the natural elements is estimated at more than $12 million.

Districts in the Khatlon and Leninabad regions, the Gorny Badakhshan Autonomous Region and districts subordinate to the Republic are in a critical situation. The Republic's population has suffered greatly as a result of the natural disasters; more than 1,500 persons are homeless, 47 were killed and 37 hospitalized.

At this difficult time, the Government of the Republic is taking all possible measures to eliminate the consequences of the natural disasters. Through the efforts made, it has been possible to minimize loss of life.

Nevertheless, the natural elements are continuing to rage, and further reports about their effects appear daily. At the present time, in order to provide assistance to the population, the Republic is in urgent need of food, medicine, supplies and equipment, mobile homes and tents, but most of all funds. Approximately $40 million are necessary in order to provide one-time material assistance to the population in distress, build and renovate houses and reinforce support embankments.

The Government of the Republic of Tajikistan appeals to the Governments of friendly foreign countries and public and international organizations to respond to the misfortunes that have befallen our Republic and provide all possible assistance in eliminating the consequences of the natural disasters.

I express the hope and belief that the assistance provided by you will enable us to cope with the national catastrophe and that a feeling of immeasurable gratitude will long remain in the heart of every citizen of the Republic of Tajikistan who today is in distress.

(Signed) Yakhyo AZIMOV
Government of the Republic of Tajikistan

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General Assembly
Security Council

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S/1998/371
5 May 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-third session
Items 10, 112 and 157 of the preliminary list*
REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE WORK OF THE ORGANIZATION
RIGHT OF PEOPLES TO SELF-DETERMINATION
MEASURES TO ELIMINATE INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Letter dated 4 May 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On the night of 26 to 27 April 1998, 22 civilians, including 7 men, 7 women and 8 children (ages 3-10) belonging to two Kashmiri families, were massacred in cold blood at Seri, Village Bandala (District Bhimber) in Azad Kashmir. Two others were seriously injured. The site of the crime lies at a distance of approximately 600 metres from the line of control on the side of Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

A thorough week-long investigation into the massacre has been conducted. After a careful evaluation of all the evidence (details are provided in the attached annex), it has been established beyond any reasonable doubt that it is a trans-line of control act of terrorism by the Indian armed forces.

This blatant incursion across the line of control by Indian military personnel has raised tension to an even higher level, increasing further the threat to peace and security in the region. It also adds a new destabilizing dimension to the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, which remains a major flashpoint in the world.

I have been instructed to request you to bring the aforementioned serious violation of the line of control and heinous act of Indian terrorism to the immediate attention of the Security Council.

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* A/53/50.

In view of the gravity of the situation on the line of control, it is important that the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) be strengthened and enabled to play its indispensable role in the maintenance of peace in this volatile region.

I would appreciate it if the present letter could be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under items 10, 112 and 157 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ahmad KAMAL
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

ANNEX

Details of the massacre of 22 persons in Jammu and Kashmir on the night of 26 to 27 April 1998

Location	Seri, Village Bandala (District Bhimber), Azad Jammu and Kashmir (600 metres from the line of control inside Azad Jammu and Kashmir.
Casualties	Twenty-two dead - seven men, seven women and eight children (ages 3-10) and two others seriously injured. All the victims belonged to two families.
Nature of the attacks	The victims were incapacitated prior to the attack by the possible use of canister gas. Most of them were shot in the head with 9 mm bullets from silencer-fitted weapons. Daggers were used to mutilate the bodies. The victims were in bed at the time of the killing.
Evidence	The presence of Indian ammunition cases, watch and daggers on the site: an Indian-made watch (Digiana Time), reflecting India and Pakistan standard times, a dagger and dagger grip, and several written notes were recovered from the scene of the crime. Thirty-four fired 9 mm cases and five or six AK-47 cases were found at the site. The 9 mm cases bore the markings of the Kirat Ordnance Factory, India. Eye witness accounts confirm that assailants withdrew across the line of control into Indian-occupied Kashmir after the attack. Soon after the attack Verey light signals were sighted from Indian-held positions. The approach was methodical and carried out with military precision. The operation involved deployment of action and protection groups.

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12 May 1998
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Fifty-third session
Items 46 and 113 (a) of the
preliminary list*

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: IMPLEMENTATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS INSTRUMENTS

Letter dated 7 May 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Turkmenistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that, on 13 March 1998, the President of Turkmenistan, Mr. Saparmurat Niyazov, issued a decree on activities relating to the celebration in Turkmenistan of the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The decree by the President of Turkmenistan confirmed the national programme of activities proposed by the Majlis (parliament) and the Government of Turkmenistan devoted to the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and also the composition of the Organizational Committee for Celebrating the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The President of Turkmenistan is the Chairman of the Organizational Committee for Celebrating the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Committee is composed of the Vice-Chairman of the Majlis (parliament) of Turkmenistan, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Culture, the Minister of Education, the Minister of Justice, the Director of the Turkmen National Institute for Democracy and Human Rights, the Chairman of the Turkmenistan National Trade Unions Centre, the Chairman of the Women's League of Turkmenistan, the Chairman of the Turkmenistan Youth Alliance, the Director of

* A/53/50.

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the "Turkmenpress" State Information Agency, the Director of the History Institute of the Turkmenistan Cabinet of Ministers and others.

The national programme of activities devoted to the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights provides for the following:

(a) A special meeting of the Majlis (parliament) of Turkmenistan devoted to the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

(b) The holding in conjunction with representatives of accredited international organizations in Turkmenistan of:

(i) An international conference on the topic "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and experience acquired in the democratic development of States";

(ii) An international seminar on the topic "Implementation of international standards for the rights of women and children in the legislation and practice of independent Turkmenistan";

(iii) A national seminar on the topic "The national legal status of permanent neutrality and Turkmenistan's compliance with its obligations relating to the human dimension";

(c) A scientific conference on the topic "The experience of people's democracy and customary law in Turkmenistan's State and social structure";

(d) Public readings conducted in all regions of the country, in conjunction with creative, religious and international organizations, on the topic "Spiritual rebirth and the establishment of a democratic society in Turkmenistan";

(e) The organization of thematic television and radio series entitled "Ensuring and protecting the constitutional rights and freedoms of citizens in Turkmenistan" and "Saparmurat Turkmenbashi's concept of the building of a democratic and humane society in Turkmenistan";

(f) The large-scale publication in the State language (Turkmen) and Russian of brochures with the text of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

(g) The publication of collections of international and national legislative acts relating to:

(i) Humanitarian law: international instruments and the legislation of Turkmenistan;

(ii) The legal status of women in Turkmenistan;

(iii) The constitutional rights and duties of young people in Turkmenistan;

(iv) The legal status of foreign nationals in Turkmenistan;

(h) The regular publication in national and local newspapers and magazines of a series of articles and sketches relating to the implementation of the rights and freedoms of citizens, the building of a civil society, and the democratization of State and public life in Turkmenistan;

(i) The holding in the country's cities and districts of folklore and musical festivals, sporting events, and fine-arts competitions, including children's festivals and competitions;

(j) The organization in libraries, museums, high schools and institutions of higher learning of photographic exhibitions and thematic display stands devoted to the life and activities of people in Turkmenistan;

(k) The holding in the country's high schools and institutions of higher learning of thematic competitions and quizzes relating to contemporary norms of international law and Turkmenistan's legislation in the field of human rights and freedoms.

In addition to the foregoing, I have the honour to state that the law of Turkmenistan on lodging appeals in court against actions by State bodies, public associations, local-government bodies and officials that violate the constitutional rights and freedoms of citizens, adopted by the Majlis of Turkmenistan, entered into force on 8 February 1998. On 28 March 1998, the Majlis also adopted a draft law on the Civil Code of Turkmenistan, which has been submitted for national discussion.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the fifty-third session of the General Assembly, under items 46 and 113 (a) of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Aksoltan ATAEVA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Turkmenistan
to the United Nations

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General Assembly

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12 May 1998
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Fifty-third session
Item 113 (c) of the preliminary list*

HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATIONS AND REPORTS OF SPECIAL RAPPORTEURS AND REPRESENTATIVES

Letter dated 8 May 1998 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw to your attention the statement on the National Assembly elections in Nigeria issued on 5 May 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(Signed) John WESTON
Permanent Representative of the
United Kingdom to the United Nations

* A/53/50.

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ANNEX

[Original: English and French]

Statement on the National Assembly elections in Nigeria issued on 5 May 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union

The European Union has been following closely the so-called transition to civil rule in Nigeria and has concluded that the process is a failure.

The final results of the March 1997 local elections and the final vote count for the December 1997 State Assembly elections have still not been released. The National Electoral Commission of Nigeria and Transition Implementation Committee documents on those elections have not been published. On the basis of these observations, and the recent announcement that the five registered parties have adopted Abacha as their consensus Presidential candidate, the European Union considers that the transition programme is in grave danger of being compromised.

None of the five registered parties met the deadline set by the Electoral Commission for the submission of the list of their candidates for the 25 April National Assembly elections. Indeed, some lists of candidates were still unpublished on the day of the election. The European Union is concerned about the arbitrary disqualification of candidates and the continued non-publication of the draft Constitution which provides the legal basis for these elections. In addition, many Nigerians who might otherwise wish to participate in such elections remain in jail.

The European Union concludes that the extremely low voter turnout for the State and National Assembly elections demonstrates that the Nigerian people no longer have confidence in the transition process.

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Fifty-third session
Item 113 (c) of the preliminary list*

HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATIONS AND REPORTS OF SPECIAL RAPPORTEURS AND REPRESENTATIVES

Letter dated 8 May 1998 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw to your attention the statement on the murder of Bishop Gerardi in Guatemala issued on 4 May 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex distributed as a document of the General Assembly.

(Signed) John WESTON
Permanent Representative
of the United Kingdom
to the United Nations

* A/53/50.

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ANNEX

[Original: English and French]

Statement on the murder of Bishop Gerardi in Guatemala issued on 4 May 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union

The European Union presents its most profound condolences to the Church and the people of Guatemala over the brutal murder of Bishop Juan Gerardi Conedera on 26 April 1998.

The European Union recognizes the valuable work carried out by Bishop Gerardi, who was prominent as a driving force behind the report "Guatemala, Never Again", produced by the inter-diocesan project "Recovery of the Historical Memory".

At the ceremony to mark the delivery of the report on 24 April in the Metropolitan Cathedral, Bishop Gerardi stressed the importance of truth and social justice for national reconciliation. The European Union shares Bishop Gerardi's vision and appeals to all Guatemalans not to allow this cowardly and foul murder to distract them from the full implementation of the peace accords.

The European Union urges the Government of Guatemala to continue to take all steps necessary to ensure a full investigation of the murder in order to bring those responsible to justice.

The European Union also calls upon the Government of Guatemala to support the work of the Truth Commission and to take all appropriate measures to ensure the safety of its members.

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A/53/121
12 May 1998
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

Fifty-third session
Item 49 of the preliminary list*

QUESTION OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS (MALVINAS)

Letter dated 8 May 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to request that you have the text of this letter and its annex, containing a note submitted on 30 April 1998 by the Government of the Argentine Republic to the Embassy of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in Buenos Aires, distributed as a document of the General Assembly under item 49 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Fernando PETRELLA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* A/53/50.

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ANNEX

Note dated 30 April 1998 from the Government of Argentina addressed to the Embassy of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in Buenos Aires

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship, Office of the Malvinas and the South Atlantic, presents its compliments to the Embassy of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and wishes to refer to the drilling operations being carried out to the north of the Malvinas Islands.

The Argentine Government rejects the so-called "right" of the United Kingdom to authorize oil drilling activities in the Argentine continental shelf. Reiterating the terms of the Argentine statement of 27 September 1995 and the Argentine complaint of 5 October 1995 addressed to the United Kingdom Government, the Argentine Government declares that it neither recognizes nor accepts the call for tenders for the exploration and exploitation of resources which are located in maritime zones belonging to the Argentine Republic and over which it has legitimate rights of sovereignty and jurisdiction.

The Argentine Government reiterates its inalienable rights over the Malvinas, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime zones.